



Office of the General Counsel

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October 12, 2012

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Docket No. 96-128, Petitioner Martha Wright *et al.*, Alternative Rulemaking Proposal

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops ("USCCB") supports the May 18, 2012 letter from the United Church of Christ, OC, Inc., the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and a host of other religious and civic organizations urging the Federal Communications Commission to reduce the exorbitant rates for telephone calls from prisons and detention centers. USCCB joins these organizations in asking the Commission to take action on the above-referenced petition that has been pending before the Commission since 2003 and capping the charges that can be imposed for interstate prison and detention center phone calls.

USCCB is filing this letter to provide to the Commission additional information about immigrant detention centers, which also charge the same unacceptably high telephone rates as prisons, devastating both those detained and their families.

Federal immigration laws and practice have resulted in a more than 500 per cent increase of the number of non-citizens incarcerated and awaiting deportation, including women and minors, to 429,000. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security is required to detain and deport immigrants who have committed certain offenses in the past, even if they have served a sentence for that offense and are now contributing members of society. Many of these people spend months or even years in detention centers because they are refused repatriation by their countries of origin. These detentions place considerable hardship on other family members living in the United States or in their country of origin, many of whom have depended on the income of the person incarcerated. These detentions also make contact with family and legal counsel critical to those detained, but exorbitant telephone rates make that almost impossible.

USCCB urges the Commission to take into account this additional information to develop regulations which will cap interstate prison and detention center telephone rates.

Sincerely,

Katherine Grincewich
Associate General Counsel